ANG
Bayan

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Central Committee, Communist Party of the Philippines

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Marcos then, Marcos now

It is right for the Filipino people to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the EDSA Uprising, the four-day historic revolt that delivered the final blow of their 14-year struggle, which ended the corrupt and fascist dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos Sr.

To prolong his stay in Malacañang, Marcos Sr imposed martial law in 1972 and used the military and police to unleash fascist terror. Marcos blindfolded, muzzled, and oppresed the whole nation, while he amassed wealth and wallowed in power.

The Marcoses plundered at least $10 billion (or nearly ₱600 billion) and stashed it in foreign banks, or used to buy mansions, land, buildings, jewelry, businesses, and other properties. The Marcoses seized their rivals' businesses and favored their cronies and loyal minions. The Marcoses amassed wealth, while people got buried deep in poverty.

The Filipino people waged relentless and continuous struggle for 14 years. They marched the streets to protest, and took the path of armed struggle in the countryside. Armed and unarmed, they valiantly persevered and

sacrificed to end the dictatorship's rule. The barefaced cheating by Marcos in the 1986 elections caused the explosion of the people's outrage, rousing them to the streets in the four-day uprising.

Marking the EDSA Uprising this 2026 holds special significance. The commemoration of the uprising that toppled the then corruption-riddled fascist dictatorship, will be held amid the overflowing people's rage over the billions of pesos pocketed from corrupt flood control projects. Protest actions have surged since September 2025. The people's anger at corruption remain ablaze and threatens to erupt again in the streets.

The EDSA Uprising will be commemorated this year in the face of rising clamor to hold accountable all those involved in plunder, up to the very top. After four decades, another Marcos is now at the center of the Filipino people's anger and protests.

After months of desperately covering up Marcos' involvement in corruption, evidence has surfaced pointing to how he himself, in collusion with officials of Malacañang and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), masterminded the vast kickback-collection scheme from government infrastructure projects.

By junking the impeachment complaint filed against Marcos, Congress effectively prevented the public exposure of evidences, including the record of received kickbacks reaching ₱8 billion delivered to his house in Forbes Park. Complicit with Akbayan and other politicians posturing as anti-corruption, Marcos exerts all effort to deflect the people's anger, using the specter of "Dutertes' return" to scare the people who are pushing to hold him accountable.

Marcos's kickbacks from flood control projects is only part of the Marcoses' grand scheme to use his power to amass wealth. Since the Marcoses returned to Malacañang, the courts dismissed at least seven graft cases against them, involving over ₱3 billion in stolen wealth. Marcos pushed the enactment of the Maharlika Fund to enable his use of up to ₱75 billion in government funds for investments in businesses of his favored bourgeois compradors.

Despite being rivals in politics and plunder, bureaucrat-capitalists are united by their class interests in oppressing the people. Without people's protests, they would not hold fellow corrupt officials accountable, for fear of their own future accountability. Though ousted from power in 1986, the Marcoses were not held accountable or made to pay by six successive governments. The Marcoses still hold hundreds of billions of pesos in stolen wealth, which they have used in past years to gradually return to power.

Government officials and the ruling classes' plunder and wealth accumulation have become even more rampant in past decades. Every regime is notorious for large-scale anomalies—Kamag-anak Inc, PEA-Amari, Jueteng Protection, NBN-ZTE Deal, Pork Barrel King, Pharmally Scandal and others. Facing deepening economic crisis, they have grown even more shameless and brazen in stealing people's funds. Duterte started the massive kickbacks in flood control projects which Marcos expanded. Even as vice president, Sara Duterte, notorious for corruption like her father, also embezzled hundreds of millions of pesos.

Marcos and his accomplices pocketing billions of pesos in people's funds stoke the masses' fury. While foreign capitalists and local ruling classes revel in wealth, the toiling masses and those with small livelihoods suffer immensely amid relentlessly rising food and commodity prices, low wages and salaries, unemployment and livelihood dislocation, failed services, continuing environmental destruction and resulting disasters. Subservient to US imperialist power, the armed state directs its fascist ferocity against the people.

The people will mark the 40th year of the Edsa Uprising amid the strengthening call, especially of the youth, to end the rotten ruling system. To achieve the people's aspiration for genuine change, it is indeed necessary to end the semicolonial and semifeudal system, and the class rule of bureaucrat-capitalists, in league with comprador bourgeoisie, big landlords, and foreign monopoly capitalists.

The people must grasp the lessons of history to illuminate the path forward for the struggle for national democracy and a socialist future. The people must forge broad unity to advance the revolutionary struggle, through people's protracted war. The Party calls on the people, especially the youth, to join the New People's Army! No matter how challenging or great the sacrifice, let us advance the armed struggle in the countryside, and establish the new democratic government of our future.

Details of Marcos kickbacks exposed

ACT Teachers Partylist Rep. Antonio Tinio exposed details of Ferdinand Marcos Jr's involvement in corruption linked to anomalous flood control projects. In a February 10 speech in Congress, he disclosed having personally seen message exchanges between Marcos and former Presidential Legislative Liaison Office head Adrian Bersamin, who acted as Marcos's "gobetween" in the transactions. Bersamin is the grandnephew of Marcos's former executive secretary, Lucas Bersamin.

The exchanges took place from December 2024 to July 2025, when Marcos ordered the insertion of ₱100 billion worth of projects into the 2025 budget. At the center of the messages was Bersamin's delivery of an ₱8 billion kickback that was later revealed Marcos used in the 2025 elections. Former Department of Public Works and Highways undersecretary Roberto Bernardo earlier revealed that he handed ₱8 billion to Bersamin and then education undersecretary Trygve Olivar. The messages shown to Tinio said Bersamin informed Marcos that the amount had been "fully delivered" in March 2025.

Days before Marcos' July 2025 State of the Nation Address (SONA) where he reproached legislators with the words "you should be ashamed" over the flood control projects, Bersamin delivered an additional ₱2 billion kickback to Marcos in the latter's purchased house in Forbes Park.

The information came from Rep. Leandro Leviste, who earlier disclosed that he possessed videos and affidavits from members of the Bersamin family attesting to the events. He shared these pieces of evidence with representatives from Makabayan, the Liberal Party, and other groups.

Because Leviste hesitated to make these public, the videos and messages were not included in the impeachment complaint filed against Marcos. The complaint was dismissed on February 10, the day Tinio exposed the evidence Leviste had gathered.

Anti-corruption protests, assemblies continue

Progressive groups launched assemblies and protests in recent weeks against corruption in preparation for a big demonstration on February 25, the 40th EDSA uprising anniversary. These activities call to hold accountable all those involved from the very top.

The Kilusang Bayan Kontra Kurakot (KBKK, or People's Anti-Corruption Movement) led an assembly of over 50 organizations at the University of the Philippines-Diliman in Quezon City on February 14. Bishop Gerardo Alminaza, Caritas Philippines president and Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines Episcopal Commission on Social Action chairperson, sent a message of solidarity to the assembly. The STOP Corruption Alliance held a separate gathering in Davao City on the same day.

KBKK's allied organizations held two Black Friday Protests, on February 13 and 20. Actions took place in four cities in the National Capital Region, as well as in Baguio City, Bulacan, Laguna, Cavite, Batangas, Cebu, Iloilo and Tacloban City.

On February 20, Quezon City local officials prohibited progressive groups from staging a rally on EDSA and from calling for Marcos' resignation.

NPA defense kills five 11th IB soldiers

A series of active defensive actions by the New People's Army–Southeast Negros killed five 11th IB soldiers on February 15 in Barangay Santo Niño, Tanjay City, Negros Oriental. The unit's report said three encounters took place between 5:30 and 7 in the morning.

The NPA unit was conducting na investigation into the peasant masses' problems in the barangay when the 11th IB launched its attack.

Protests

Mindoreños protest against dredging. Residents of Barangay Iriron in Calintaan, Occidental Mindoro protested on February 6 to denounce the dredging operations in their barangay conducted without permission. They condemned Ovada Philippines Inc. for destroyinG their barangay's shoreline.

QC urban poor protest against demolition threats. Residents of Sitio San Roque in Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City gathered on February 10 to protest the looming demolition in three areas of the said sitio. The planned road widening for the Ayala-owned Vertis North mall will evict over 300 families.

Sara Duterte's presidential run denounced. Progressive groups launched a protest at Ateneo de Manila University on February 19 to denounce Sara Duterte's announcement on February 18 that she will run for president. Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Koalisyong Makabayan branded the declaration as madness and a desperate bid to escape accountability amid impeachment complaints.

Romualdez dynasty behind blacksand mining in Leyte

Residents of MacArthur, Leyte protested in February against Mac-Arthur Ironsand Project Corporation (MIPC) for blacksand mining in their town. Behind the operation is the Romualdez dynasty, which also controls other destructive mining operations in Eastern Visayas.

The MIPC is a contractor of Strong Built Mining Development Corporation (SBMDC). The Mines and Geosciences Bureau-Region 8 in 2007 granted SBMDC a 25-year Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) covering 7,411 hectares of land in the towns of Dulag, Mayorga, MacArthur, Javier, and Abuyog. The SBMDC was bought in 2024 by Bright Kindle Resources & Investments Inc., owned by former House Speaker and Leyte first district congressman Martin Romualdez, cousin of Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

Residents oppose the operation because mining will destroy farmlands and irrigation systems critical to food production. Some peasant have reportedly been barred from entering their own lands. Residents' collective action in 2022 forced the temporary shutdown of MIPC-SBMDC operations.

Before the MIPC-SBMDC entered MacArthur, Nicua Mining Corporation had already operated blacksand mining in the town. The operation contaminated Lake Bito with an accumulation of oil and other chemicals dumped from the mine, repeatedly killing tons of fish and other aquatic life. In 2012, residents of Barangay Villa Imelda and Barangay Liwayway barricaded against the operation.

Protest against Rice Liberalization Law and oil price hike

Peasants and farmworker groups protested at the Department of Agriculture in Quezon City to mark the 7th anniversary of the enactment of the rice import liberalization law last February 13.

Rice imports rose from 2.57 million tons to over 5 million tons from 2019 to 2026. This drove down palay farmgate prices, from an average of ₱20 per kilo in 2018 to ₱14–₱16 per kilo in succeeding years. As a consequence, farmers suffered losses and were forced to reduce or stop rice production altogether, burying them deeper into debt because of rising costs of production and the absence of state support.

Anakpawis Partylist members also protested on February 10 in Quezon City to denounce the relentless oil price hikes and the collusion of the US-Marcos regime with the oil cartel.

Gasoline prices increased again by ₱1.20/liter, and diesel and kerosene by ₱0.60/liter on February 17. Since the year began, the net increase has reached ₱4.20/liter for gasoline, ₱7/liter for diesel, and ₱5/liter for kerosene.

Meanwhile, Petron reported having increased its profits by 37%, or ₱9.7 billion in November 2025. While oil companies rake in billions, the toiling masses suffer untold hardships.

Residents stop Woggle Corporation mining

The unrelenting fight of the people of Dupax del Norte, Nueva Vizcaya against the intrusion of Woggle Corporation into their community forced the Mines and Geosciences Bureau to issue an order on February 5 temporarily suspending the company's exploration permit. The agency cited "force majeure" or events beyond the control of the permit holder as the reason. These include the setting up of barricades, the firm opposition, and the ongoing tension between residents and the company.

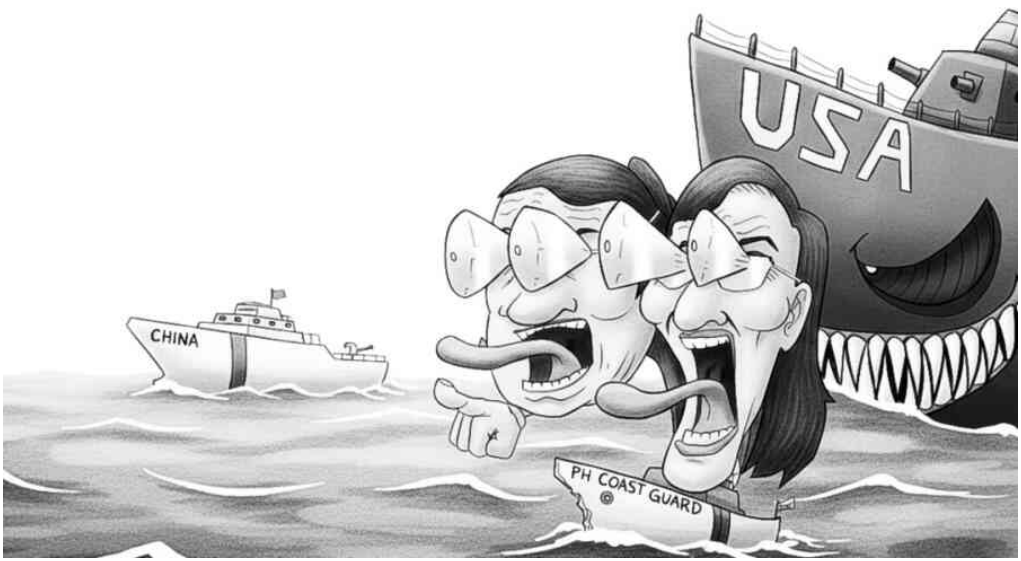
The company continued its exploration in defiance of the order. On February 17, with the help of the PNP, the company transported its equipment and delivered to the DENR the mineral samples it took from the village.

Hundreds of residents, environmental groups, church people, and supporters of the Dupax struggle protested on February 12 at the Nueva Vizcaya capitol to demand the immediate cancellation of the company's exploration permit.

The protest coincided with the hearing for the seven environmental defenders arrested after the violent dispersal of the barricade on January 23. Citing humanitarian considerations, RTC Branch 30 in its hearing withdrew its order for seven residents of Dupax del Norte to explain why they should not be charged with indirect contempt (violating a court order).

On February 16, the Defend Nueva Vizcaya Movement was established at UP Diliman. Community leaders from Dupax del Norte, environmental groups, indigenous people, church members, academic institutions, and individuals pledged to defend the environment, natural resources, and the people's rights in Nueva Vizcaya.

US relentlessly conducts aggressive naval maneuvers in Philippine waters



Amid anti-China criticisms by Philippine Coast Guard officials, Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), and by pro-US senators—who engage in pretentious promotion of Philippine sovereignty—the US relentlessly conducts aggressive and interventionist military and naval maneuvers in the West Philippine Sea (WPS). These maneuvers heighten the possibility of armed clashes erupting between the US and China, which will drag the Philippines into an inter-imperialist war.

At the start of the year, the AFP announced plans for the US to conduct various activities in the WPS from January 15 to March 31. The US staged a

Bilateral Bomber Air Patrol from February 2-6 covering the Scarborough Shoal (Bajo de Masinloc) to the Luzon Strait. An Australian warship "sailed" and encroached into the troubled waters around the Kalayaan Island Group on February 9-10, before docking at Subic Bay in Zambales on February 13.

It joined the US and Japan for dangerous maneuvers in the WPS under the 14th Multilateral Maritime Cooperative Activity.

Meanwhile, preparations are underway for yet another round of destructive war games Salaknib and Balikatan (Sabak) set from April to June. One after another, top US, Japan, and Australian military officials have arrived and left the Philippines since January to prepare for these activities.

500+ Military Activities

The mentioned war games are part of over 500 interventionist activities the US plans to launch in the Philippines this year. These exclude US unilateral (without the AFP) war games to be conducted in the country's territory. These also exclude war games initiated by Australia and Japan.

To justify the more frequent and larger war games this year, the US claims 2026 is critical because China plans to use force to bring Taiwan back under its control starting 2027. This despite China's repeated statements that any "reunification" with Taiwan will proceed peacefully.

The list of war games was approved back in August 2025 at the annual Mutual Defense Board-Security Engagement Board meeting. It was reaffirmed on February 16 at the 12th Philippines-US Bilateral Strategic Dialogue where the US announced it will stockpile more drones and missiles against China in the country. Thus, US maneuvers in the WPS are not "reactions" to China's presence but calculated actions to heat up the region.

Deceptive "transparency"

While claiming to promote "transparency" in the WPS through publicizing China's "intrusion" in the WPS, the AFP and US agents deliberately cover up the massive presence and intrusion of American troops in Philippine affairs and their appropriation of strategic locations in the country.

This February alone, the US publicized the formation in July 2025 of the Army Rotational Force-Philippines. Alongside its operations is the Littoral Rotational Force-Luzon, a US Marine Corps unit mainly based in the northern tip of Luzon. In October 2025, these units fell under Task Force Philippines, a US command formed after many Southeast Asian countries rejected the US push to forge a formal military pact against China. American troops take

shifts in this formation to establish permanent presence in the country.

Aside from warships, the US also operates ocean-survey and Chinese-ship surveillance vessels in the South China Sea and Philippine waters (WPS and inter-island). These ships are manned by “civilian mariners” under the US Military Sealift Command.

Their presence far exceeds the publicized nine “agreed locations” under the EDCA. These American troops enjoy extraterritorial rights and protection. They are safe from local laws and cannot be easily held accountable for any crimes they may commit.

Groups launch nationwide campaign to register individual jeep franchises

For nearly a decade of fake transportation modernization program, conditions of drivers and commuters in the country have sharply worsened. The Public Transport Modernization Program (PTMP), formerly Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program or “jeepney phaseout,” removed over 180,000 jeeps from the streets and took away the livelihood of roughly 500,000 drivers and operators. Millions of commuters were tormented and suffered from higher fares and vehicle shortages.

In the face of this situation, the Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at

Opereytor Nationwide (Piston, or Unity of Drivers' and Operators' Associations Nationwide) conducted successive mass filings or simultaneous document submissions to the Land Transportation Franchise Regulatory Board calling for the restoration of individual franchises for traditional jeeps. They took advantage of the agency's individual provisional authority (IPA) or temporary franchise, first offered in 2021 to address public vehicle shortages in many routes. Though provisional, Piston considers it a major step toward restoring the 5-year individual franchises. At the same time, Piston urged the "mass withdrawal" of drivers and operators from consolidated franchises.

The group firmly asserted that franchise consolidation means "monopoly, seizure, and destruction" of livelihoods of individual drivers and operators. The mass closure of cooperatives due to deep debts and early breakdown of "modern vehicles" prove this.

Condor-Piston exposed the corruption system in Albay where fake cooperative leaders pocket ₱100,000-₱200,000 commissions for each "modern" vehicle purchased. The leader borrows from the bank, but "cooperative" members pay it. The Marcos regime and its agencies encourage this practice.

Baguio City drivers are deep in debt having been forced to buy imported vehicles at ₱3.3 million each, and pay ₱33,000 monthly installments. Piston-Metro Baguio said this is a death sentence for small operators' livelihoods and favors foreign suppliers and big corporations. High fees could push fares up to ₱50 per trip.

National struggle

Many drivers and operators in National Capital Region, Cordillera, Panay, and Bicol continue to file en masse to secure provisional individual authority and registration.

Drivers and operators in Metro Baguio have united to expose corruption in cooperatives, corporations, and associations. They revealed irregularities like lack of genuine elections of leaders, excessive membership and other fees, excessive leadership control, and no dividends or fair profit shares. There is also lack of transparency and anomalous money handling that drown drivers and operators in debt and suffering.

Drivers in Iloilo and Guimaras simultaneously filed documents for temporary franchises on February 12. They also called to junk the undemocratic, pro-business, and destructive Local Public Transport Route Plan of Iloilo City and Provincial Public Transport Route Plan of Iloilo Province. Prior to this, over 30 organizations, both consolidated and non-consolidated, under No To PUV

Phaseout Coalition Iloilo and Guimaras gathered on January 31. Consumers and passengers also protested against vehicle shortages in Iloilo City on February 16.

Condor-Piston Bicol members in Albay and Sorsogon gathered on February 8 to set mass filing by drivers and operators from various Albay districts. Sorsogon drivers attended and shared their added problems tied to anomalous Local Public Transport Route Plan. They said new routes lacked consultation and the process is riddled with corruption.

Piston explained that their push for provisional authority and registration is based on the fight to restore the right to individual franchises. Individual drivers and operators undergo registration to demand the state to give back their right to livelihood and decent lives.

Human rights violations recorded in various parts of the country

Cases of abduction, Red-tagging, harassment, and the filing of fabricated charges against peasants, workers, and human rights advocates were recorded in various parts of the country.

Abduction. Elements of the 47th IB abducted 60-year-old peasant Lolly Alperto while he was picking coffee near his home in Sitio Agpapataw, Barangay Binobohan, Guihulngan, Negros Oriental on January 31. Alperto was reportedly fired at and believed to have been wounded before taken by the soldiers. His family has yet to locate him to date.

Arrest and filing of charges. Security guards and the PNP-Cabuyao arrested 21 peasants who were holding a protest camp in Sitio Veinte-Veinte Cuatro, Barangay Casile, Cabuyao, Laguna on February 7. The peasants oppose the land grabbing by the Yulo family-owned Laguna Estates Development Corporation. They were charged with “trespassing” but the prosecutor immediately dismissed the case. The company claims ownership over the 24-hectare land in the barangay.

In Bulacan, PNP-San Jose Del Monte (SJDM) elements on February 11 arrested Engineer Even Calajate, one of the witnesses against the Primewater company. Five of SJDM Mayor Rida Robes’ supporters accused him of perjury. The case is related to his testimony before the Senate in November 2025 during a public investigation into Primewater’s dismal service.

Harassment. Two self-identified soldiers in plainclothes went to the home of retired Southern Mindanao Region labor organizer Eduardo Capuyan on February 10. They interrogated him about several individuals the military is hunting.

In Caloocan City, the office of Gabriela-Caloocan was forcibly entered and robbed on February 17. The perpetrators stole a projector, leaflets for the EDSA anniversary on February 25, and other materials. The office was ransacked. It had first been entered and placed under surveillance by men

who introduced themselves as police on October 28, 2025.

Red-tagging. In Albay, posters from the NTF-Elcac tagging progressive Bicolano leaders and groups as “communists” were seen around and inside universities and schools since February 8. Among the victims was ACT Bicol Union vice president Julius Espadero.

NPA condemns traitor couple in Camarines Norte

The New People's Army (NPA)-Camarines Norte strongly condemned the surrender, ultimate betrayal, and treachery against the masses by the couple Marlon Asis (alias Pots) and Julie Grace Lola (alias Haraly). The 42nd IB presented the two to the public as "surrenderees" on February 4 at the battalion headquarters in Labo, Camarines Norte.

The 42nd IB said in a statement that the couple surrendered a .30 caliber and a 60 caliber machine gun, ammunition, explosives, and other war equipment. "They betrayed the province's peasant and toiling masses in exchange for their selfish interests," the NPA-Camarines Norte said. Surrendering weapons aside, the couple gathered and transmitted information that led to successive encounters that harmed both the NPA and civilians. They also pocketed funds of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The NPA-Camarines Norte warned the people of the province and the region to stay vigilant against the black propaganda and lies being spread by the couple. The two were declared "persona non grata" in all guerrilla fronts and areas covered by the revolutionary movement in Camarines Norte.

Campaign against traitors. The revolutionary movement in Southern Tagalog launched a campaign this February to expose and denounce counterrevolutionary traitors. The NPA and the National Democratic Front in the region released posters bearing photos of the most notorious traitors collaborating with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the US-Marcos regime. They said these individuals should be condemned for serving as instruments of Red-tagging and intimidation against the people. They called for the widespread distribution of the posters throughout the region.

Two decades of 12% VAT cause suffering to Filipino masses

The Filipino masses have shouldered the 12% value-added tax (VAT) for two decades since the reactionary government began imposing it in February 2006. The government raised the VAT from 10% to 12% and extended it to nearly 90% of products and services. This marks the highest VAT rate across Southeast Asia.

The government collects VAT every time ordinary Filipinos buy food products (processed meat, canned fish, cooking oil, milk, coffee, sugar, noodles, etc.), clothing and shoes, medicine, household appliances, construction materials, and services like electricity, water, and telecommunications in the country. The tax is collected by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR). The Bureau of Customs (BOC) also imposes VAT on imported products and collects it.

History of VAT

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) first pushed tax reform implementation in the Philippines in 1984. Four years later, the US-Aquino I regime imposed the 10% VAT through Executive Order No. 273. The tax covered many domestic products except goods marked for export.

The VAT coverage was expanded for the first time in May 1994 with the congress under the US-Ramos regime enacting Republic Act (RA) No. 7716 or Expanded VAT (EVAT). The IMF set EVAT as one condition for the government to borrow $650 million in June 1994. It extended VAT to additional products and services, including pesticides and telecommunications and air and sea travel services. Legal challenges delayed its implementation by two years.

The US-Arroyo regime officially raised the 10% VAT to 12% VAT in February 2006 following Congress' passage of RA 9337 or Reformed VAT in May 2005. Later amendments raised VAT to the exorbitant 12% rate and expanded it under the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law (2018) and Digital VAT (2024).

Where does VAT go?

BIR data shows VAT as the agency's second largest annual collected tax (25% of total collections). The BIR collected ₱7.15 billion when the 10% VAT launched in 1988. Collections grew to ₱40.93 billion in 1996 from ₱29.57 billion in 1995 after expansion. Following the VAT increase to 12% hike in 2006, the government collected ₱140.93 billion from ₱87.86 billion in 2005.

The government earned ₱487 billion from VAT from January to August 2025 while BIR recorded one of its highest collections in 2024 at ₱643.85 billion. BIR total VAT collections is estimated at ₱7.29 trillion since 1988. This excludes BOC collections from VAT on imported products.

Like other taxes, VAT funds the reactionary government's operations. It pays the ballooning foreign debt, military and defense misprioritization, infrastructure projects, and for kickbacks and corruption for bureaucrat-capitalists.

Straight to their pockets

The recently exposed Marcos regime's systemic corruption doubles the VAT burden. Anna, a 43-year-old mother of three in Pasig City, endures this suffering. In her January bills for electricity (₱4,994.47), water (₱1,095.8), and internet (₱2,400), the state pockets an estimated ₱1,000 VAT. The tax also piles on top of their food, LPG, school, and rent expenses.

“All they collect goes straight into their pockets and serves their personal interests, so Filipinos continue suffering no matter how hard they toil,” Anna said. She joins the broad call to hold accountable all involved and return the people’s money.

Members of Gabriela protested at Commonwealth Market on February 13 and 20 in Quezon City to demand: “Scrap VAT, penalize corruption!” This launches their campaign to junk VAT, their group’s central fight until International Working Women’s Day. The Makabayan Bloc is also pushing the Presyo Ibaba Bill in congress to eliminate the 12% VAT.

In brief

average minimum wage in the country, a mere 40% of the ₱1,253 living wage as of January. This is grossly inadequate, even the highest rate in the National Capital Region (₱695/day). Conditions are worse in other regions, where wages range from ₱435 to ₱550.

8 CO-PERPETRATOR

of **Rodrigo Duterte** in the case of crimes against humanity in his **bogus "war on drugs"** were named by the ICC. All were with Duterte since his time as mayor of Davao City, except for Vitaliano Aguirre II.

Ronald "Bato" Dela Rosa
Senator and Former PNP Chief

Christopher "Bong" Go
Senator and Former Presidential Aide

Oscar Albayalde
Former PNP Chief

Camilo Cascolan
Former PNP Chief of Staff

Vicente Danao
Former Manila Police District Director

Dante Gierran
Former NBI Director

Isidro Lapeña
Former PDEA Chief

Vitaliano Aguirre II
Former Justice Secretary

since the abduction and enforced disappearance of **Ariel Badiang,** NDF for the Southern Mindanao Region peace consultant. Operatives of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Eastern Mindanao Command seized him in Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon on February 6, 2023.

increase in the 2026 education infrastructure budget after the Marcos regime transferred the "allocables" for classroom construction from the DPWH to the DepEd. **However, this fund can build only 24,527 classrooms—far short of the total shortage of 165,443.**

300 MILLION

workers, peasants, students, professionals, and small entrepreneurs joined the **nationwide strike in India** on February 12 to fight for their rights and denounce the ultra-right government's policies in their country.

7 OIL TANKERS from Venezuela were illegally halted and seized by the US in international waters since December 2025. Two of these were bound for Cuba.

45,472
metric tons

average annual drop in local fish production—from 2.6 million MT in 2010 down to only 1.9 million MT

This **resulted from the state's failed disaster response,** its continuing destructive projects in fishing grounds and marine ecosystems, and allowing commercial operations in municipal waters.

Source: *Oceana Philippines*